

## POST-MOBILIZATION PSYCHOLOGICAL DEBRIEFING

The psychological debriefing consists in going back over the events by allowing each person to share his or her experience and to recompose the collective narrative of what happened. This collective narrative must have a beginning, a middle and an end. It must make it possible to situate the different scenes that the group went through in space and time.

The objective is to have a framework of the event on which each person can rely on to relate his or her emotional experience. Constructing this story will allow us to identify possible points of confusion and misunderstanding and then to make sense of these points by relying on the story given by the others. In the event of a traumatic shock, this allows your brain to process the information again, and thus to (re)function.

If these points of misunderstanding persist, symptoms that bring the experience back to life (flashbacks, nightmares...) may appear until your brain builds a narrative that makes sense. Until the experience is understood, it is not processed/integrated. This can then plunge the person into anxious and then depressive symptoms. If you feel that there are areas of misunderstanding in your group that you are unable to resolve, try to get information to help you do so, or even help from a psychologist to construct a story that is acceptable to the group, even if you do not have all the information.

If you develop symptoms that do not go away in 4-6 weeks despite this advice, do not hesitate to consult a professional.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR A GROUP PSYCH DEBRIEFING

If possible, do this debriefing quickly after the action ("on the spot") by making sure that all the people who acted together are present / A second debriefing moment can be done later ("cold") to make sure of the emotional and psychological state of each person and to analyze with more distance what happened (organizational debriefing).

## HOW TO BUILD THE STORY COLLECTIVELY ?

Each person is invited to recount his or her experience since the beginning of the event. We try to build this story in several voices; we can, for example, suggest that each person tells part of the story as they go along and then come back to it to clarify any gaps or grey areas. The idea is for the story to be coherent, especially in terms of chronology and space. There is no need to be rigorous. Any grey areas are important clues to detect because they can indicate misunderstandings and trauma. Debriefing as a group after a mobilization in which shocking events took place is a bit like watching an emotionally hard movie with someone holding your hand. The goal is not to fast-forward through the difficult parts, but to be able to watch them at the same speed as the others, while having the resources of those who support you.

## QUESTIONS TO GUIDE THE EXCHANGES

**It is not the dimension of transmitting information that guides us, but the capacity of each person to feel and manage the emotions she had to go through during the situations evoked in her story.**

- Can you tell us how you feel after this mobilization (physically and emotionally)?
- How did it go for you?
- Are there any intense moment(s) you would like to share here so we can talk about them together?

## POSSIBLE SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

- Welcome, round of names/nicknames and setting up of the framework (no one is a prisoner of this framework, one can leave the debriefing at any time, by indicating one's need for possible support)

- Emotional check :

- Brief moment of recognition of the energy deployed, of the commitment of each person
- How do I feel now after the last events? (if there are many people, it is possible to do it in pairs or threes)

- Collective construction of the story through a back and forth process in order to locate the shadowy areas and the possible needs for support of each person

- When the debriefing is over, the events have been recounted as best we can and together. We close this space with comforting words that remind us of the experience we have learned, of solidarity and, if possible, of hope for the future.

- We can also take the time to remind ourselves of the means available to us in terms of psychological and emotional support (information brochures, fellow listeners, militant psychologists, etc.)

- Find, if possible, a quiet place accessible to all where you will not be disturbed. Define together a duration for this moment.
- Guarantee the confidentiality of the exchanges.
- Keep your benevolence despite possible tensions and disagreements.
- Try not to judge what is being shared (without preventing you from reacting when the time comes by sharing your feelings and emotions).
- See if one of you wishes to facilitate this moment and facilitate the exchanges or call upon an external person of confidence